

Virginia State Parks Update to the House Appropriations Committee

Presented by Joe Elton, State Parks Director
October 21, 2013

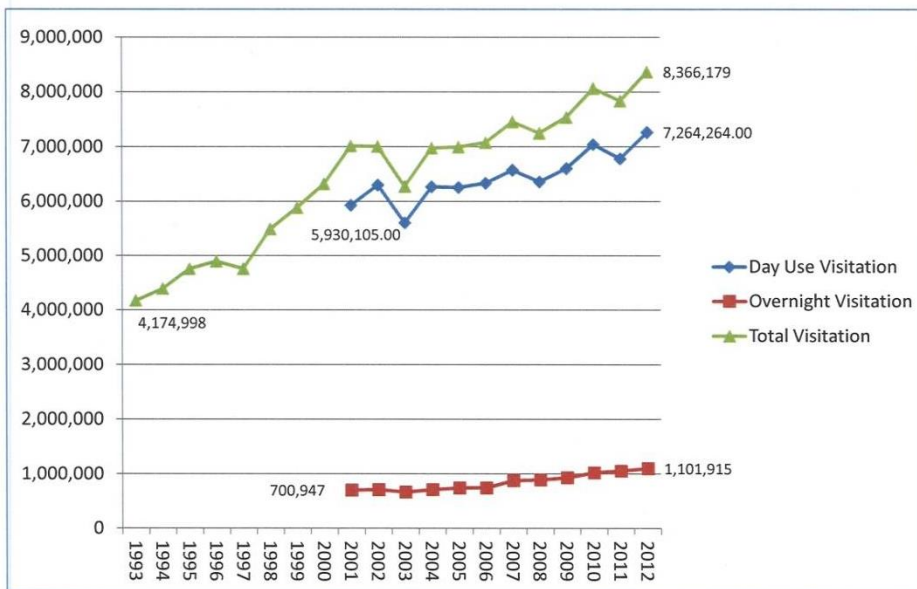


Chairman Putney's Request

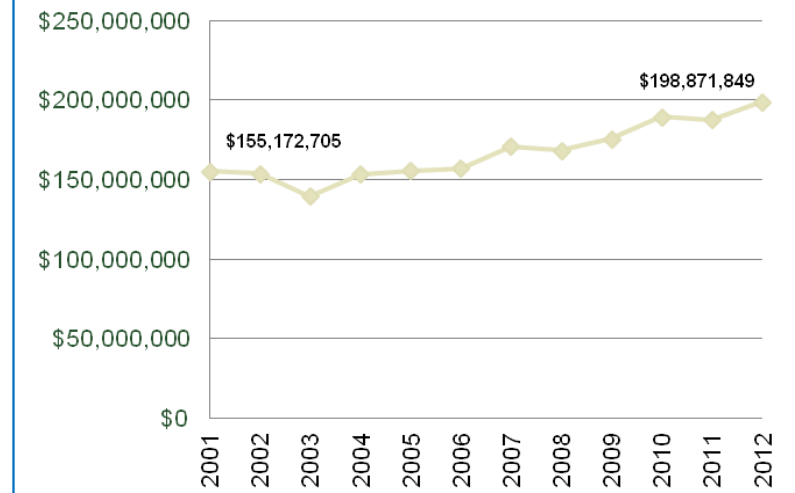
1. Update on State Park Visitation and Revenue Collections
2. Update on High Bridge Trail and Powhatan State Park
3. Update on Projects Authorized by the General Assembly during 2013 Session
 - Powhatan State Park Phase 1 (b)
 - Widewater State Park Phase 1
 - New Cabins at various parks
4. Maintenance, Capital, Operational Challenges
 - Historic Overview
 - Maintenance Reserve Needs
 - Future Capital Projects & New Parks

Park Visitation and Economic Impact

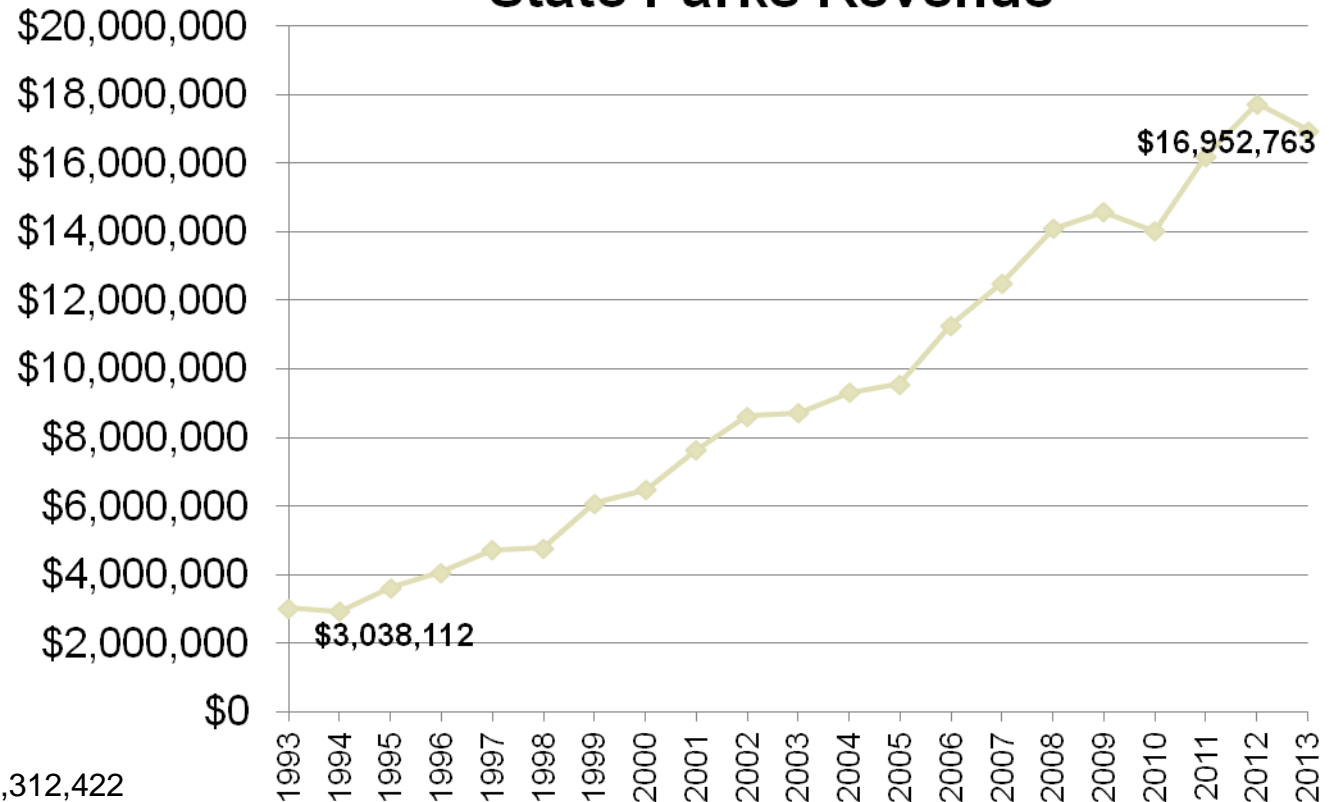
State Park Visitation



Economic Impact



State Parks Revenue



FY 2013	
Cabin Revenues	\$5,312,422
Camping Revenues	\$3,989,365
Parking Revenues	\$2,192,705
Merchandise	\$1,621,172
Swimming	\$ 933,547
Food	\$ 760,025
Equipment	\$ 312,114
Conference Facilities	\$ 159,920
Private Concessions	\$ 55,275

Note:

The first quarter of FY13 was flat due to the July derecho and the final quarter was down significantly due to one of the rainiest years on record. Much of the overall revenue loss was in swimming.

High Bridge Trail State Park

Virginia's longest pedestrian bridge and America's 5th longest
1,108 Acres

2012 Attendance 188,467

2012 Economic Impact \$3,015,472

Master Plan Adopted in February 2007

Cumberland, Nottoway, Prince Edward, Appomattox Counties and the Towns
of Farmville, Burkeville and Pamplin City
Opened first 4 miles on August 22, 2008



Powhatan State Park on the Historic James

1,565 Acres

Master Plan Adopted in February 2007

23,413 visitors July 6 – September 30, 2013

Powhatan County



Projects Authorized by the General Assembly in 2013

- Powhatan State Park Phase 1 (B) - \$3.4 M estimate
 - Campground Loop
 - Eastern James River Access Road
 - Route 522 and 617 Intersection Improvement - \$3.7 M estimate
- Widewater State Park Phase 1 - \$7.5 M estimate
- New Cabins at Various Parks - \$7.5 M estimate

Current Status of 2013 Projects

- **Widewater:** July 27, 2013 : Submitted CO-2 to BCOM for \$1M planning funds to begin project. After months of scope questions and cost reviews, BCOM has recommended \$733K for approval to DPB. To date, DCR has not received approval from DPB of this CO-2. DCR has no authority to begin this project without receipt of approved CO-2
- **New Cabins at various parks:** Sept 26, 2013: Submitted CO-2 to BCOM for \$1M planning funds to begin project. Discussions for this project have been underway for 2 months with BCOM. BCOM has not yet recommended this project to be approved and it has not been forwarded to DPB. DCR has no authority to begin this project without receipt of approved CO-2.
- **Powhatan 522/617 intersection:** A Draft MOU has been sent to VDOT on Sept. 24th. VDOT has not approved or edited the MOU. Once the MOU is signed by DCR and VDOT, a CO-2 will be submitted to BCOM for approval. VDOT conducted a public meeting on Sept. 24th for this project and is moving forward with their own planning funds.
- **Powhatan campground project:** Planning funds were approved for a 30 site campground in March 2013. To date, an RFP for A/E services has been completed. A/E negotiations are now complete and DCR has entered into a contract for services. Surveys, geotech borings, historic reviews and the EIR will begin this month.

New Cabins: 2013 General Assembly

In Priority Order

- 1. Lake Anna: (2) six bedroom cabins
- 2. Twin Lakes: (1) six bedroom cabin, (2) three bedroom cabins *
- 3. Kiptopeke: (2) three bedroom cabins, (2) two bedroom cabins *
- 4. Claytor Lake: (2) three bedroom cabins
- 5. Bear Creek: (2) three bedroom cabins, (1) six bedroom cabin
- 6. Natural Tunnel: (4) two bedroom cabins *
- 7. Shenandoah River: (2) three bedroom cabins
- 8. Occoneechee: (2) two bedroom cabins
- 9. First Landing: (2) three bedroom cabins



* Full Cabin Build Out

Parks Purchased with 1992 GOB Funding - \$95 million

- James River State Park
- Shenandoah River State Park
- Wilderness Road State Park
- Staunton River Battlefield State Park
- Belle Isle State Park

James River State Park

1,500 Acres

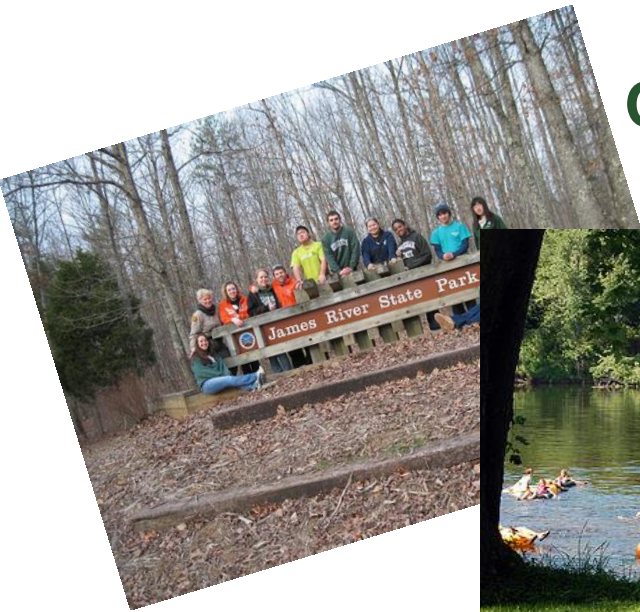
2012 Attendance 57,421

2012 Economic Impact \$3,000,020

Master Plan Adopted in December 2004

Buckingham County

Opened June 20, 1999



Shenandoah River

1,619 Acres

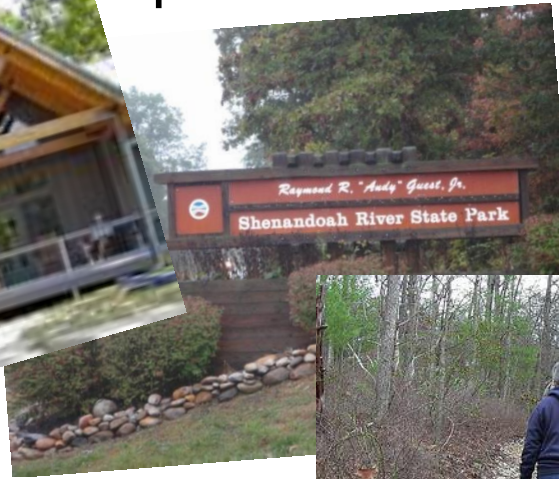
2012 Attendance 223,639

Economic Impact \$5,804,058

Master Plan Adopted in March 2001

Warren County

Opened June 19, 1999



Wilderness Road

310 Acres

2012 Attendance 174,221

2012 Economic Impact \$2,787,536

Master Plan Adopted in December 1998

Lee County

Opened June 1993



Staunton River Battlefield (donated)

300 Acres

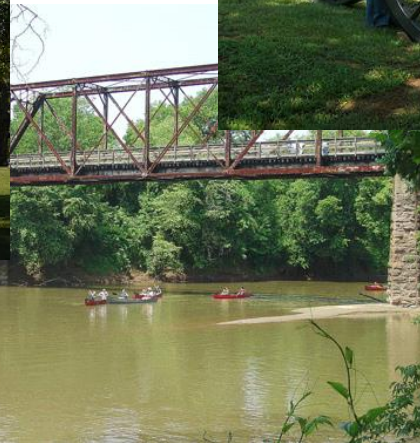
2012 Attendance 30,635

2012 Economic Impact \$490,160

Master Plan Adopted in December 1998

Halifax County

Opened in 1995



Belle Isle

739 Acres

2012 Attendance 41,326

2012 Economic Impact \$1,120,826

Master Plan Adopted in 1998

Lancaster County

Opened June 3, 1993



Parks Purchased with 2002 GOB Funding - \$119 million

- Seven Bends
- Biscuit Run
- Mayo River
- Middle Penninsula
- Widewater (development underway)
- Powhatan (transferred property from DJJS (opened July 6, 2013))

Seven Bends

1,066 Acres

Master Plan Adopted in November 2008

Shenandoah County



Biscuit Run

1,195 Acres

**Master Plan Recommended for Adoption by the Board
of Conservation and Recreation on September 11, 2013
Albemarle County**



Mayo River

342 Acres

Master Plan is scheduled to be developed in
October 2015
Henry County



Middle Peninsula

431 Acres

Master Plan Adopted in October 2010
Gloucester County



Widewater

1,100 Acres

**Master Plan Recommended for Adoption by the Board
of Conservation and Recreation on September 11, 2013
Stafford County**



Historical Overview

Commission on the Future of Virginia's Environment

- In 2002, the legislative Commission on the Future of Virginia's Environment concluded that State Parks were “woefully underfunded in key areas, especially operational expenses and preventive maintenance.
- The Commission recommended the additional need for: \$8.2 M annually and 112 new full-time staff to address operational shortages; an additional \$8 M annually to address unfunded maintenance reserve projects; \$3.9 M in one-time expenses for vehicle and equipment replacements.
- The Commission also recommended a rebenchmarking to more accurately reflect the future budgetary and staffing needs resulting from the expansion of facilities, services and parks.
- The Commission concluded that funding for State Parks needs to be a “greater priority in Virginia”.

State Park Maintenance Reserve Projects

115 Projects = \$98,768,500

Priority Projects = \$19,420,200

Projects Overview:

- Replacement of failing septic drain fields dating back to the 1930's
Belle Isle, Caledon, Douthat, Westmoreland, Pocahontas \$ 2,450,000
- Numerous Electrical Systems, HVAC, and Utilities Improvements
Various Parks \$ 3,161,200
- Historic Overnight Rental Cabin Renovations \$11,900,000
- Restroom and Bath House Renovations \$ 2,370,000
- Dredging and Shoreline Erosion Control \$ 4,400,000
- Historic Facility Preservation \$ 9,250,000
- ADA Renovations/Improvements \$ 5,900,000
- Trail Repairs \$14,510,000
- Road Resurfacing Statewide, Various Parks \$30,000,000

Future Capital Projects

- Foster Falls Hotel Renovations Completion \$2,500,000
- Master Plan Phase 1 Development of Land Banked Parks
(Historically the Commonwealth has allotted about \$7.5 M for initial Phase 1 development per park)
 - Approved Master Plans for Middle Peninsula, Widewater, Biscuit Run, Seven Bends, Mayo River
estimated full Phase 1 development at \$80,000,000
- Future Park Proposals
(Historically the Commonwealth has begun park acquisition with funding in the \$8 – 10 million range)
 - Clinch River (Tazewell, Russell and Scott Counties)
 - Loudoun (Loudoun County)
 - Meherrin River (Brunswick County)
 - Natural Bridge (Rockbridge County) - Possible Donation
- Cabin and Yurt Construction 17 Parks \$62,700,000
- Campground Construction 23 Parks \$23,500,000
- Office and Administration Facility Construction \$ 2,200,000
- Campground Bathhouse Replacements \$ 7,350,000

Foster Falls Hotel

New River Trail State Park



Capital Projects Cont.

• Restroom and Bath House Construction	\$ 9,600,000
• Spray Ground/Water Recreation Facilities	\$ 4,100,000
• Visitor Center Exhibits	\$ 3,500,000
• Construct 12 Park Visitor Centers	\$24,500,000
• In-Holding and Land Acquisition	\$25,000,000
• Emergency Generator Installations at Various Facilities	\$ 910,000
• Day Use Restroom Construction	\$12,750,000

Staffing Update

- On June 21, 2013 - Chief of Staff approved filling 16 vacancies
- On September 11, 2013 - Chief of Staff approved filling 2 vacancies
- 41 vacancies remain in the field
- 6 vacancies remain in the Central Office

Update On Other Park Activities

- Youth Conservation Corps (14-17 year olds)
 - 88 crew members
 - 11 programs
 - 21,120 hours of service valued at \$464,640
- AmeriCorps (all ages/mostly young adults)
 - 36 AmeriCorps members placed in Virginia State Parks
 - Each member provided 675 volunteer hours for a total of 24,300 hours
- Volunteers (all ages)
 - 6000 Volunteers
 - 340,000 volunteer hours
- 2013 Runner up for the National Gold Medal for “Excellence in Parks and Recreation Management”

